



President's FY 2006 Budget Focuses Resources on Students Who Need Them the Most

President Bush proposes high school initiative, more assistance to help students pay for college
Budget includes funding increases for special education, Title I

FOR RELEASE:
February 7, 2005

Contact: Susan Aspey, Ed Walsh
or Samara Yudof
(202) 401-1576

President Bush today unveiled his plans to build upon the success of the historic *No Child Left Behind* education reforms by submitting a budget request for 2006 that provides \$56 billion in discretionary funding for the U.S. Department of Education. Since taking office, President Bush has increased education funding by \$13.8 billion, or 33 percent.

The president's 2006 budget request continues his strong commitment to educational excellence for all children and exercises fiscal discipline by focusing on programs that work. The budget directs taxpayer resources to the students who need them the most—including funding increases to help states and school districts implement *No Child Left Behind*, the president's sweeping education reform law. It also saves taxpayers' money by proposing to stop funding programs that duplicate efforts already underway or that have been proven ineffective.

President Bush has proposed nearly \$1.5 billion for a new initiative to ensure high school students graduate with the skills they need to succeed in college or the workforce; a \$603 million increase in Title I grants to help the neediest local schools implement *No Child Left Behind*; and a \$508 million increase for special education grants to states so that all children, including those with disabilities, have the opportunity to reach their full academic potential.

President Bush's 2006 budget also includes a record \$13.7 billion for the Pell Grant program to increase the maximum grant to \$4,150 and help an estimated 5.5 million low-income students pay for their higher education. The president's budget is a common-sense approach that would improve the effectiveness of the student aid programs while reducing program costs and subsidies to private lenders. The savings generated from the student aid reforms would result in a \$19 billion investment in the Pell Grant program over the next 10 years, including the funds needed to provide a \$500 increase in the maximum award over the next five years (including the \$100 increase for FY 2006) and \$4.3 billion to eliminate the current funding shortfall. In total, the Department of Education will administer more than \$78 billion in grants, loans and work-study assistance to more than 10 million students and parents in FY 2006.

"Three years ago, President Bush made a commitment to provide a quality education for every child, and to close the achievement gap that plagued our schools and society," U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings said. "The president has delivered on his promise—thanks to *No Child Left Behind*, our nation's schools are making great strides toward ending the 'soft bigotry of low expectations' and ensuring that all children have the opportunity to learn.

"But the job's not done. In the 21st century, education is not confined to the four walls of the schoolhouse and learning does not end when you are handed your diploma. Our future is one of flexibility and change. Whether they choose higher education or the workforce, our young adults must have the skills needed to take full advantage of all the opportunities that await them.

"High schools are the portal to the future. A high school diploma must be a ticket to success in the 21st century. We've all seen the studies that show American students are losing significant ground in reading and math scores as they enter high school. We can do better, and our students deserve better." Among the highlights of the 2006 budget request are:

Extending the Success of *No Child Left Behind* to High Schools

Our high schools must adapt to the 21st century: Just two-thirds of students entering ninth grade will receive their diploma within four years—and fewer than four out of 10 will directly enter college. President Bush has a plan to change this. The president's 2006 budget includes:

- \$1.24 billion to improve the academic achievement of students at risk of falling behind or dropping out;
- \$250 million to measure student performance in reading/language arts and math in high school;
- \$200 million—a \$175 million increase—for the Striving Readers program to improve the reading skills of teenage students;
- \$120 million—a \$90 million increase—for the Math and Science Partnership to help struggling students reach grade level; and
- \$125 million for a new Community College Access program to support "dual enrollment" by high school students who take college-level courses.

Continuing Our Commitment to Students in Need

President Bush's 2006 budget focuses substantial resources on making the most difference for students most in need: President Bush's 2006 budget request builds on the momentum of the *No Child Left Behind Act*, which is improving academic performance across the nation. The president's budget includes:

- \$25.3 billion—an overall increase of nearly \$1 billion—for the *No Child Left Behind Act*;
- \$13.3 billion—a \$603 million or 4.7 percent increase—for Title I grants to help local school districts improve low-performing schools, enhance teacher quality and expand choices for students and parents. If enacted, the request would be an overall increase of \$4.6 billion—52 percent—in Title I funding since the passage of the *No Child Left Behind Act*; and
- \$11.1 billion—a \$508 million increase—for special education grants to states, a 75 percent increase for students with disabilities since 2001.

Giving Parents More Options and Teachers the Tools They Need to Help Students Achieve

Highly qualified teachers and highly involved parents are the keys to a quality education: President Bush's budget includes several proposals aimed at helping our teachers help their students and giving parents more choices about their child's education, including:

- \$500 million for a Teacher Incentive Fund to attract and reward the very best teachers for high-risk, high-poverty schools;
- Making permanent the increase in loan forgiveness from \$5,000 to \$17,500 for highly qualified math, science and special education teachers who serve low-income communities;
- \$50 million for a Choice Incentive Fund to give parents more opportunities to transfer their children to better-performing schools; and
- \$219 million for charter schools, including \$37 million to help charter schools acquire, lease and renovate their facilities.

Helping More Students Afford a Higher Education

Access to college should not depend on financial success: Higher education is increasingly becoming a need, not an option, in the 21st century. Nearly two-thirds of the fastest-growing jobs will require a higher education. And workers must be able to refine and broaden their skills on their timetable, not the government's. President Bush's 2006 proposed budget includes:

- A record \$13.7 billion for the Pell Grant program, which would increase the maximum grant award by \$100 to \$4,150 in FY 2006 and help an estimated 5.5 million students pay for their higher education;
- A \$19 billion investment in the Pell Grant program over the next 10 years, including the funds needed to provide a \$500 increase in the maximum award over the next five years (including the \$100 increase for FY 2006) and \$4.3 billion to eliminate the current funding shortfall.
- \$33 million for a new Enhanced Pell Grant program to provide up to an additional \$1,000—for a total maximum award of \$5,150—to students who complete the rigorous state scholars curriculum in high school; and
- \$50 million for a new Presidential Math-Science Scholars program to provide up to \$5,000 to low-income students pursuing math and science studies.

Spending Resources More Effectively

Taxpayers' money must be spent responsibly: President Bush's 2006 budget frees up nearly \$4.3 billion in savings by changing or eliminating dozens of wasteful, duplicative or ineffective programs, including:

- The \$205 million Comprehensive School Reform program, which duplicates activities already being carried out through Title I grants to local school districts; and
- The \$225 million Even Start program, which three separate national studies have shown has produced no significant gains in literacy skills among children or adults.

###